

REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges receipt of the office action dated July 24, 2008, in which the Examiner rejected all pending claims as obvious in view of the combination of Steenwyk (GB 2 295 409) with Kitson (US 5132624). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection for the reasons set out below.

Neither reference discloses an electrical contact that is housed in a sealed chamber that is filled with a dielectric fluid. While it is true that Steenwyk related to making and breaking electrical connections in wireline connecting electrical equipment and Kitson relates to an annular connection, neither reference teaches or suggests the use of a sealed entrance opening as required by claim 1. Specifically, claim 1 requires that each entrance opening be “*configured to receive a mating electrical contact*” and comprise “*a seal which is configured to inhibit contact between the dielectric and borehole fluids and to surround the electrical contacts when mated and to remain in sealing contact with the mating electrical contact after the electrical connection has been established by the connector.*”

Steenwyk does not disclose a use of a fluid. Kitson relates to an electrical connection that is made up outside of the borehole. Kitson discloses avoiding fluid contamination by using a insulating fluid that is more dense than the borehole fluid and by pressurizing it after the connection is made up. Neither reference contains any suggestion of a sealed chamber containing dielectric fluid for use in a wet mateable connection, as required by the present claims.

Because the references, when taken alone or in combination, do not teach all of the limitations of the claims, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are not obvious in view of the cited art.

Applicant believes that, in light of the foregoing arguments, the case is in condition for allowance. If it would be considered helpful in resolving any issues in the case, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

GRIFFITHS, Neil

/Marcella D. Watkins/

Marcella D. Watkins, Attorney
Reg. No. 36,962

P.O. Box 2463
Houston, Texas 77252-2463
(713) 241-1041